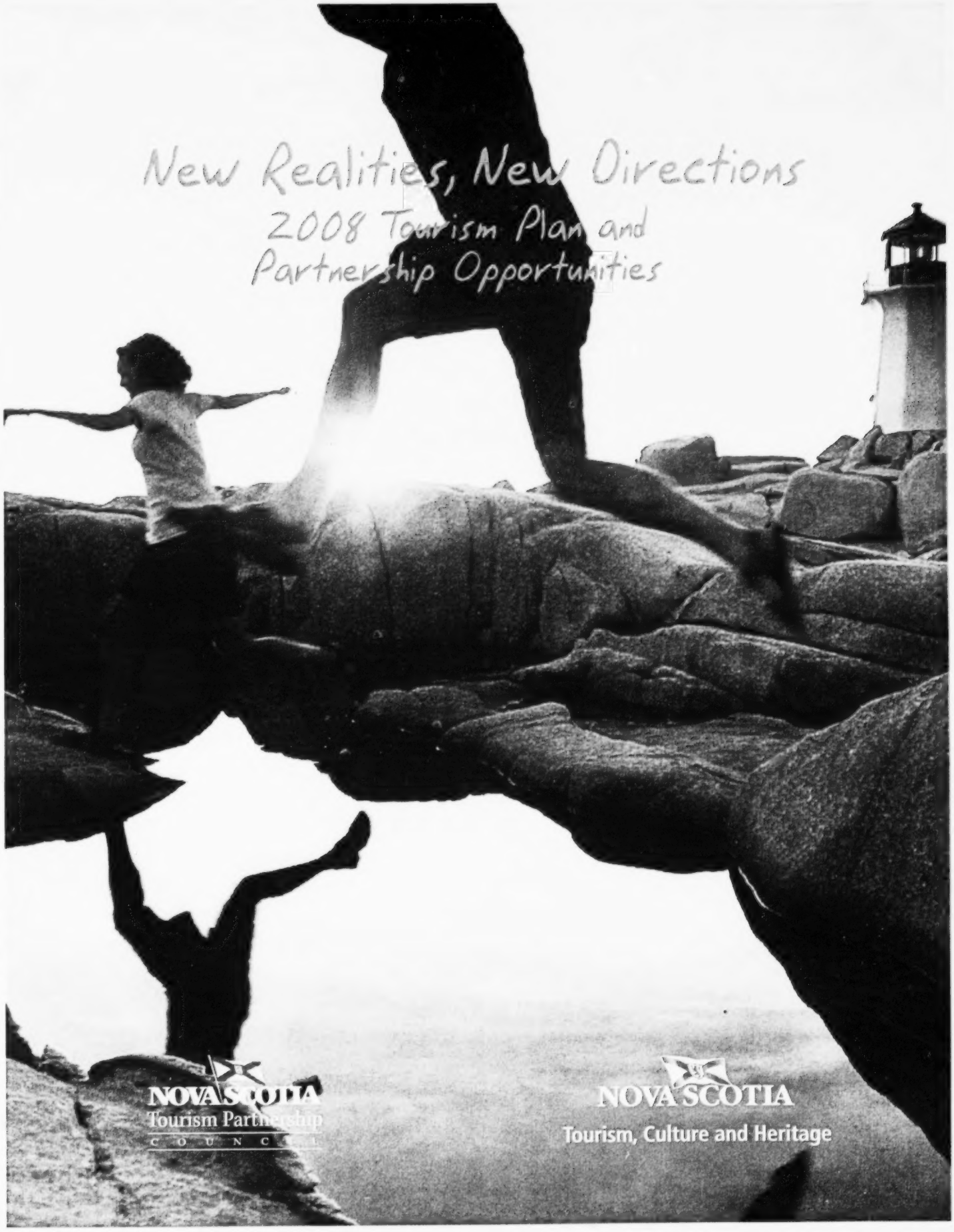

New Realities, New Directions
2008 Tourism Plan and
Partnership Opportunities
NOVA SCOTIA
Tourism Partnership
COUNCIL
NOVA SCOTIA
Tourism, Culture and Heritage

Dear Tourism Partners,

Last year, the Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage worked with the Nova Scotia Tourism Partnership Council to develop and launch New Realities, New Directions. It is a multi-year plan that addresses the significant changes we are seeing in today's tourism industry and the new face of today's travel consumers.

This bold plan has energized the industry with new ideas and strategies designed to meet the challenges before us. It is guiding our efforts to ensure that Nova Scotia's tourism products and services match the needs of today's traveler.

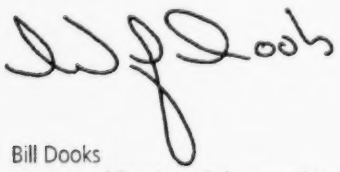
Over the past year, we have sought out the thoughts of consumers and members of the industry to determine how our department can serve both better. These conversations have helped guide a refresh of Nova Scotia's tourism brand, which we are proud to launch at this year's TIANS Tourism Summit.

The renewed brand matches Nova Scotia's attributes with what visitors are seeking when they come here. Like our tourism plan, it will engage everyone within the industry as we further evolve our product offering and continue to meet the needs of our visitors.

I am proud of the progress that both the industry and department have made over the past year. It is a testament to the passion and dedication we share when we work together to promote this place we are fortunate to call home.

I look forward to building this relationship with you. Together, we can achieve lasting success for all Nova Scotians.

Sincerely,



Bill Dooks
Minister of Tourism, Culture and Heritage

Dear Tourism Colleagues,

As someone who not only represents Nova Scotia's tourism industry but is also fully immersed in it, I share both your enthusiasm for our industry and your desire to help it reach its full potential.

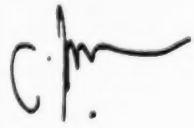
Tourism touches literally every corner of our province and has a major impact on Nova Scotia's economic health. Its success is inextricably linked to all Nova Scotians. So when a change in our industry has the potential to negatively affect our success, every one of us takes notice, and we work together to overcome obstacles.

That is why I take pride in my role as chair of the Nova Scotia Tourism Partnership Council. Every day, my council colleagues and our partners at Tourism, Culture and Heritage focus on our industry's success. We build on our strengths, recognize areas for improvement, and share our enthusiasm for the future.

As we move deeper into our second year of New Realities, New Directions, I'm excited about our success thus far and extremely optimistic about our future. That optimism is based partly on our progress as well as the new tourism brand we are introducing.

My optimism is also based on the efforts of each one of you. Your dedication to Nova Scotia's tourism industry is the reason for its success so far – and the reason it will continue to be successful in the future.

Sincerely,



Chris Millier
Chair, Nova Scotia Tourism Partnership Council

Executive Summary

It's an evolving tourism market. One in which not only the competitive environment, but consumers themselves, have changed.

That's the reason behind last year's introduction of the new, long-term strategy: New Directions, New Realities.

It is a strategy based on three key pillars:

This year and next will see us delving deeper within the strategy, implementing new and additional tactics, and moving further along those same avenues toward success.

Keeping pace with today's consumer will continue to play a significant role in everything we do, now and in the future. That reason has driven our in-depth review of Nova Scotia's current tourism brand.

After engaging both the industry and consumers, determining our province's key attributes and matching them with travelers' demands, we have developed our brand positioning statement:

Nova Scotia is North America's original maritime culture where visitors will be captivated by our culture of old world charm with a new world pulse, shaped by the sea and the spirit of our people.

As we focus on the future, this is the position we will take in all of our marketing, sales and development initiatives as we share Nova Scotia with the world.

Overview of Strategy

As the tourism market evolves, we are continually learning new ways to adjust our marketing tactics so that we can better position Nova Scotia within it.

In an increasingly competitive tourism environment, we are witnessing a change in consumer habits. Tools such as the Internet are providing consumers with the ability to plan their own vacation and Nova Scotia must compete in this environment.

Last year, in response to these changing times, we developed a long-term strategy entitled New Directions, New Realities. This strategy is based on three key pillars:

- Courtship Strategy
- Gateway Strategy
- Core Experiences

This year and next, we are continuing to delve deeper within the strategy, implementing additional tactics, and moving further along those same avenues toward success.

Courtship Strategy

The courtship strategy consists of three components: lure – sample – buy.

lure: In all advertising and communications, we lure visitors to novascotia.com or to request a Doers' & Dreamers' Guide via Check In Nova Scotia.

sample: We invite visitors to sample many core experiences that are unique to Nova Scotia in an exciting and interactive way. Novascotia.com features charming vignettes of Nova Scotian experiences, music downloads of Nova Scotian talent, and an interactive Google Earth™ Nova Scotia overlay to virtually explore the province.

buy: Finally, we offer planning tools and opportunities to book aspects of a trip to Nova Scotia.

Gateway Strategy

Given the increase in air travel to Nova Scotia, the Gateway Strategy is an important, future-focused aspect of this approach.

The core of this strategy is to tap into markets that offer direct flights to Nova Scotia. It includes new markets such as Washington, New York, Chicago and points in Europe, in combination with cities in more traditional markets such as Boston, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and Calgary.

This strategy also includes partnerships with transportation carriers and distribution channels.

Core Experiences

The final pillar of our plan is core experiences.

We realize that we need to differentiate ourselves by presenting experiences that match our customers' passions. Today's travelers are increasingly sophisticated and have varied interests.

We do this by focusing on areas where Nova Scotia has a competitive advantage. By highlighting core experiences, such as seascapes and scenic routes, emerging outdoor adventures and eco-tourism, cultural and heritage events, Celtic music and urban life with distinctive shopping and dining experiences, we tap into the passions and find something for every visitor.

Nova Scotia's core experiences include:

- Outdoor Adventure
- Cuisine
- Music and Culture
- History and Heritage
- Seacoast
- Urban Culture

Core Experiences are at the heart of everything we offer our consumers.

Highlights from 2007

Over the past year, we have witnessed numerous successes following each pillar of the strategy.

Core Experiences

Our Tourism MasterClasses, designed for senior executives and managers within tourism-based businesses, were well attended in communities across the province and featured world-class speakers on a variety of business topics.

The 5th annual Product Development Day focused on key topics such as 'bringing community brands to life through product experiences', 'delivering on promises' and 'marketing core experiences'.

Investing in our communities and local attractions continues to be a priority for us. In 2007, we invested in local attractions, including: the Peggy's Cove Enhancement, which received a new visitor's information centre and interpretive panels and signs; the building of the Joggins Fossil Institute, which will be opened on April 22 (Earth Day), 2008; and 47 other community-based projects, further building upon our competitive core experiences by showcasing our culture, heritage and coastal attributes.

Courtship Strategy

In 2007, our lure efforts were successful, stimulating a 28 percent increase in visitation to novascotia.com over the past year.

Our combined promotional and media relations tactics were equally successful, taking our core experiences directly to consumers and reaching them through numerous marketing channels. Our event in Ottawa attracted 7,000 people and drew over 14,000 hits to a specially designated landing page on novascotia.com, while almost 190,000 people at Celtic Fest Chicago had the opportunity to enjoy the traditional sounds of Nova Scotia.

And, our editorial program achieved astounding coverage. The publicity value of print was over $35,000,000, thanks in part to coverage we've received in renowned publications like National Geographic and Saveur, as well as international in-flight magazines.

Our sample efforts were equally notable.

427,000
valuable leads generated from novascotia.com to tourism operators

We're one of the first tourism departments in the world to take advantage of Google Earth™ as a marketing tool and we're quite proud of that fact. With this free program and a simple download, visitors can "virtually" visit our province from anywhere in the world.

Over 19,000 people have taken advantage of this ability – a great indication of its popularity with online visitors.

The video vignettes now incorporated into our site have also been very popular with visitors wishing to sample our province online, with almost 296,000 pageviews this past year.

When people come to novascotia.com, they're intrigued by what they find and are eager to learn more. We have seen that users on average are going to seven pages per visit and spending just over five minutes on the site.

The success of the buy component of our strategy is evident in the number of valuable leads generated from novascotia.com to tourism operators – 427,000 this year alone.

Gateway Strategy

Some highlights from the past year include the formation of a gateway team comprised of key stakeholders, such as the Halifax International Airport Authority, Destination Halifax and Nova Scotia Business Inc. – people who have an interest in increasing air travel to Halifax and in the addition of new target markets such as Chicago.

Through advertising, editorial and sales and partnership activity in Boston, Calgary, Ottawa and Chicago, we helped to stimulate awareness in key gateway markets.

Finally, we established new partnerships with companies such as Icelandair, with new countries such as Ireland, and in new opportunities like the Clipper Round the World Yacht Race, in which our Nova Scotia team is well positioned for success.

2008 Plan Tactics

Over the next year, we will continue to go deeper into our strategy and evolve our tactics to keep pace with today's consumer and our ever-changing market.

Courtship Strategy

Through online and offline advertising, marketing public relations, event marketing, promotions, editorial placement and direct marketing, we will continue to *lure* visitors to either the official Tourism website at novascotia.com or to request a copy of the Doers' & Dreamers' Guide via Check In Nova Scotia.

Promotions for 2008 include a Bluenose II visit to Toronto, Montreal and Quebec City, where she will be involved in the city's 400th anniversary celebrations. It's a significant opportunity for our industry partners to become involved with us, showcasing their offerings in major metropolitan centres, and forming new connections in key markets.

Western Canada will also be targeted through an integrated promotion of direct-to-consumer activity and a media campaign.

Our *sampling* opportunities will continue to rely heavily on our official website at novascotia.com. They will continue to include written and visual descriptions of Nova Scotian experiences and destinations, online vignettes based on the core experiences, music samples from some of our province's musical ambassadors such as In-Flight Safety, and our innovative Google Earth™ Nova Scotia overlay, which allows visitors to virtually fly throughout the province and visit destinations of interest.

Finally, this year's *buy* strategy includes more aggressive retail offers through partnerships to make it easier to buy, an increased presence for transportation partners and quality packages based around experiences. We will provide regular updates on these opportunities through both nstpc.com and Facts Flash.

Gateway Strategy

Over the next year, we will continue to build on the progress we've been making through our sales and media relations teams, as well as through strategic industry partnerships.

In 2008, our sales team will work towards targeting the cruise ship passengers, touring visitors and new travelers from targeted cities, specifically concentrating on cities in Europe, and Central and Western Canada.

Our media relations team initiatives next year will include an aggressive campaign to local travel publications in key Gateway cities, as well as throughout our existing target regions, allowing us to further increase the program's return on investment.

The key to the success of these strategies will be the relationships developed and strengthened by our partnership team – a team that will be led by the new departmental position of Manager of Partnerships. Together, the team will work with local organizations, such as Taste of Nova Scotia, TIANS and Golf Nova Scotia, to further strengthen awareness in our key Gateway markets.

Core Experiences

We will develop new, strategic core experiences, such as facilitating the use of an experience broker, who will connect the experience with the destination.

Our annual Product Development Day on April 29, 2008 will give tourism industry operators and service providers the opportunity to learn more about consumer trends and develop applicable products that are appropriate for their area.

New this year will be a Tourism Destination Area Market-Readiness program, which will allow TDAs to gauge their ability to market their product and measure the quality of their area's tourism experience.

Through industry development programs, such as the Sustainable Workforce for the Future program, we will give local tourism operators the tools they need to compete and strengthen their position in the marketplace. We will also hold MasterClasses again in 2008 – look for dates, locations and topics on nstpc.com.

Finally, one of the most significant changes is the creation of seven new touring regions. While our existing scenic travelways, such as the Lighthouse Route and Marine Drive, have served us well, and will continue to serve us as way-finding tools, we will now be identifying touring regions using familiar names for both industry and consumers. They have been developed to offer a clearer link between our core product experiences and the unique strengths of each region, helping to improve our visitors' experience.

Re-energizing the Tourism Brand in 2008

We define a brand as a promise to deliver something valued by the customer. When people think about Nova Scotia, we want them to form an image in their minds and get a feel for what it's like to experience our province.

This year, we decided to take an in-depth look at our brand and where we stand within the tourism industry.

The reasons for it are straightforward: the industry is changing; consumers are changing; and we have aggressive goals for growth – goals we can only achieve by offering travelers what they seek from a travel experience.

Through a co-creative process, we engaged visitors, potential visitors and members of the industry throughout Nova Scotia and in other parts of Canada and the US.

During our research, we asked people about the level of appeal of certain attributes in any vacation they might take. We then asked them about the fit of each of those attributes to Nova Scotia.

All of these attributes point to aspects of our culture – the place, the people and how we live. The insights gained helped us to determine the development of our new brand.

When developing a brand, there are three things to consider: the brand's attributes, benefits and personality.

For Nova Scotia, our attributes include:
- Old world charm
- New world pulse
- Shaped by the sea
- The spirit of our people

Our visitor will feel the benefits of being:
- Delighted
- Captivated
- Grounded
- Fulfilled

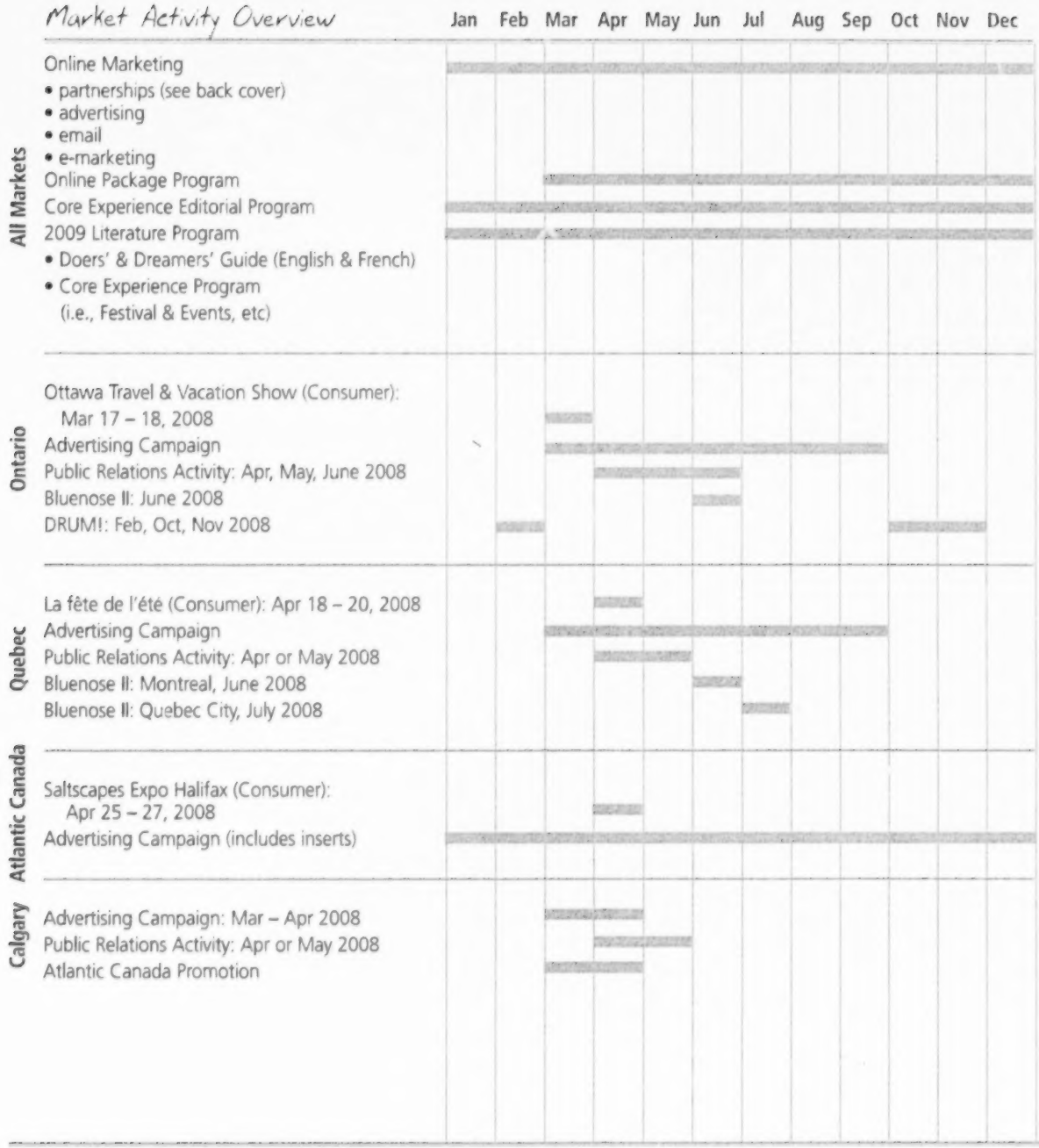
We have defined our brand personality as:
- Spirited
- Affable
- Salt-of-the-earth
- Proud

We tie all of these brand elements together in our brand positioning statement, which is:

Nova Scotia is North America's original maritime culture where visitors will be captivated by our culture of old world charm with a new world pulse, shaped by the sea and the spirit of our people.

As we focus on 2008, this is the position we will take in all of our marketing, sales and development initiatives. It is bold and energizing. Above all, it is one we can celebrate as we share Nova Scotia with the world.

Market Activity Overview



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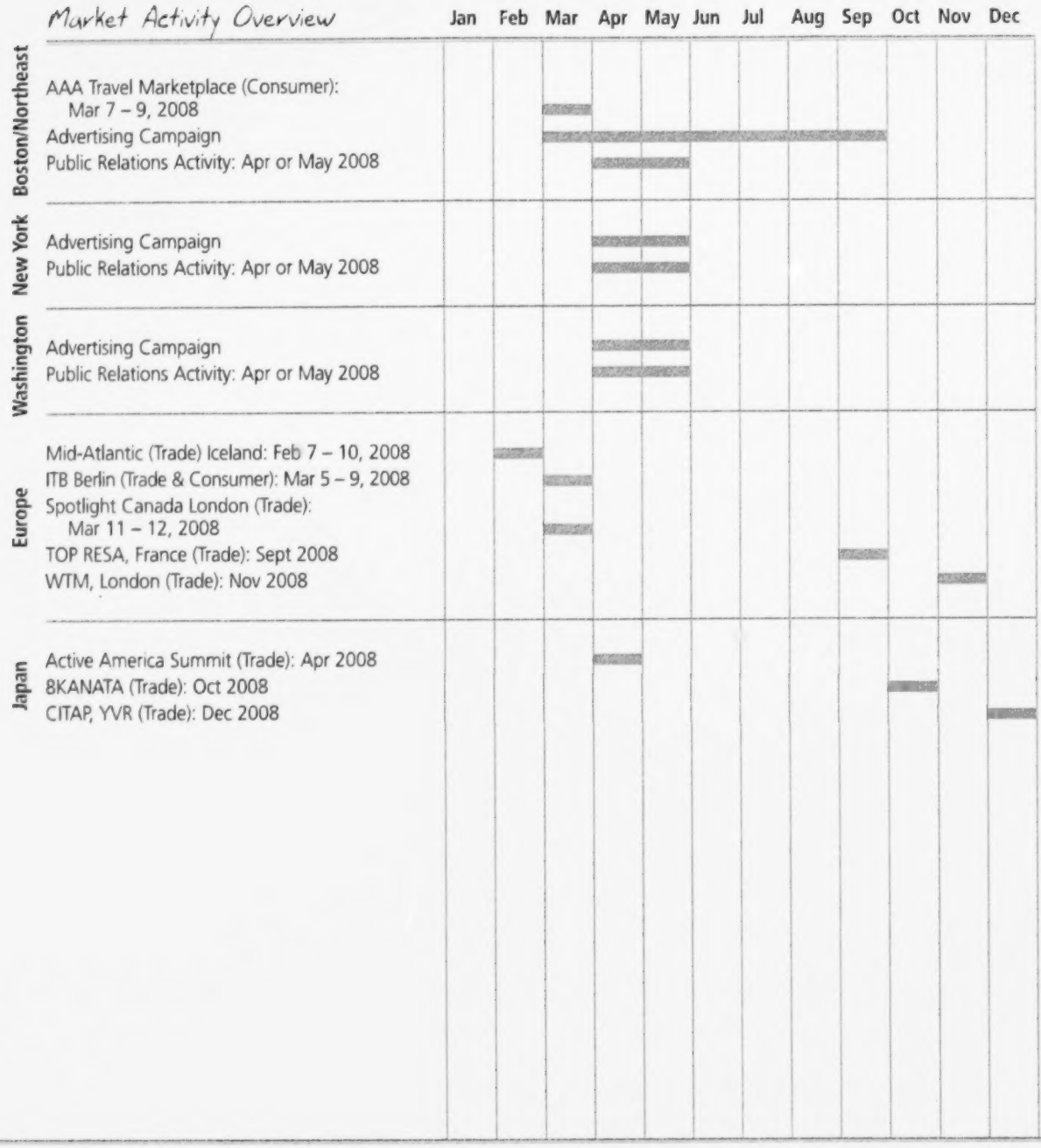
For full details on partnerships & programs please visit nstpc.com. Dates & opportunities subject to change.

Market Activity Overview



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For full details on partnerships & programs please visit nstpc.com. Dates & opportunities subject to change.

Travel Trade Marketplaces

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
American Bus Marketplace	Virginia Beach, VA Feb 2 – 7, 2008												
Rendez-vous Canada	Vancouver, BC May 24 – 28, 2008												
Atlantic Canada Showcase	Moncton, NB Oct 7 – 9, 2008												
Bienvenue Quebec	Montreal, QC Oct 28 – 30, 2008												
National Tour Association Annual Convention	Pittsburg, PA Nov 15 – 19, 2008												

Cruise Marketplaces

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Atlantic Canada Cruise Association – Taste of Atlantic Canada	Miami, FL Jan 31, 2008												
Seatrade	Miami, FL Mar 10 – 15, 2008												
Canada/New England Cruise Symposium	Portland, ME Dates TBD												
Seatrade Mediterranean	Venice, Italy Dec 9 – 11, 2008												

Product Development

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
NS Product Development Day	Truro, NS April 29, 2008												

Tourism MasterClasses
Various locations throughout Nova Scotia. A calendar of dates, locations and topics will be posted on nstpc.com.

Let's Talk Tourism Sessions

We are currently planning our Let's Talk Tourism sessions for Spring 2008. We'll have an update on dates, locations and topics in a future edition of our Facts Flash e-newsletter.

Stay tuned!

For full details on partnerships & programs please visit nstpc.com. Dates & opportunities subject to change.

Meetings, Conventions & Incentive Travel Marketplaces

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Toronto Winter Promotions	Toronto, ON January 2008												
Destination Showcase	Washington, DC February 7, 2008												
Icelandair Mid-Atlantic Conference	Iceland February 7 – 10, 2008												
Tête à Tête CSAE (Canadian Society of Association Executives) and MPI (Meeting Professionals International)	Ottawa, ON February 14, 2008												
Springtime Expo – sponsored by the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE)	Washington, DC April 3, 2008												
Third Party Planner Presentations	Toronto, ON April 8 – 10, 2008												
Hyland Group Spring Luncheon	Washington, DC May 7, 2008												
Ottawa Client Promotion	Ottawa, ON May 14, 2008												
Destination Showcase	Halifax, NS June 19 – 22, 2008												
Destination Showcase	Chicago, IL June 25, 2008												
Incentive Works Tradeshow	Toronto, ON August 18 – 20, 2008												
CSAE Annual Convention	Vancouver, BC October 2 – 4, 2008												
Bureaufest – Hyland Group	Washington, DC October 2008												
CSPEP Annual Conference	Place TBA Date TBA												
Boston Tree Lighting (Client Event)	Boston, MA Date TBA												

Contact information for these programs

Destination Halifax will lead these trade shows and promotions for partner participation by members.
For more information, please contact Brenda Peet at 429-4687 or email bpeet@destinationhalifax.com

For full details on partnerships & programs please visit nstpc.com. Dates & opportunities subject to change.

Online Partnership Programs 2008

novascotia.com *Expanded Content Listing*

Operators are encouraged to take full advantage of the FREE expanded content programs including:

Area Overview Program ..... **no charge**
Expanded Features Program ..... **no charge**
Photo Program (can now accept up to 6 photos with captions) ..... **no charge**
Tour Starting Location Program ..... **no charge**
Website Reciprocal Link Program ..... **no charge**

NEW! Homepage Packages Program: Showcase your packages on novascotia.com. More information on this program will follow via Facts Flash.
Cost ..... **TBD**

PDF Brochure Program: The PDF Brochure Program enables Accommodation, Outdoor Activity, Attraction, Festival & Event and Tour Operators to submit a PDF of their brochure for download within their listing on novascotia.com. Adding a brochure to your listing is an easy way to provide potential visitors an opportunity to find out more about your tourism experience.
Cost **$50/brochure**

Online Special Offers/Packages Program: Our Online Special Offers/Packages Program provides operators with the opportunity to feature their vacation value special offer/packages to visitors. Your special offers/packages will be featured on novascotia.com within the Packages section and within your operator listing and will be accessible by over 3 million visits annually. Focused core experience packages may also be featured in new strategic marketing communications developed for 2008. Certain criteria apply.
Cost ..... **$50/3 month offer or package**

Area Overview Program: The Area Overview Program enables Accommodation, Outdoor Activity, Festival & Event and Attraction Operators to suggest three complimentary locations/experiences that are located near their operation. The end goal of this program is to provide visitors with a better understanding of what is in the area for them to enjoy. The three experiences submitted will be included within the operators listing on novascotia.com.
Cost ..... **No Charge**

Tour Starting Location Program: The Tour Starting Location Program enables Tour Operators to submit a list of community names of where a visitor can begin their tour. The information submitted will be used to update the search tool within the Touring section to allow visitors to search by tour starting location.
Cost ..... **No Charge**

Online Advertising Program: Details of the 2008 Online Advertising Program are currently in development. More information on this program will follow via Facts Flash.
Cost ..... **TBD**

Festival & Event Listings: Festival and event organizers can enter and manage their information listings online. Registered users can add new events, update existing events or delete events on an ongoing basis. Once approved, information will be available as a listing on novascotia.com in the Festival & Event section. All festivals and events entered into the database before November 30th will be printed in the following year's Festival & Event Guide.
Cost ..... **No Charge**

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